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BILL SIENKIEWICZ INTERVIEW

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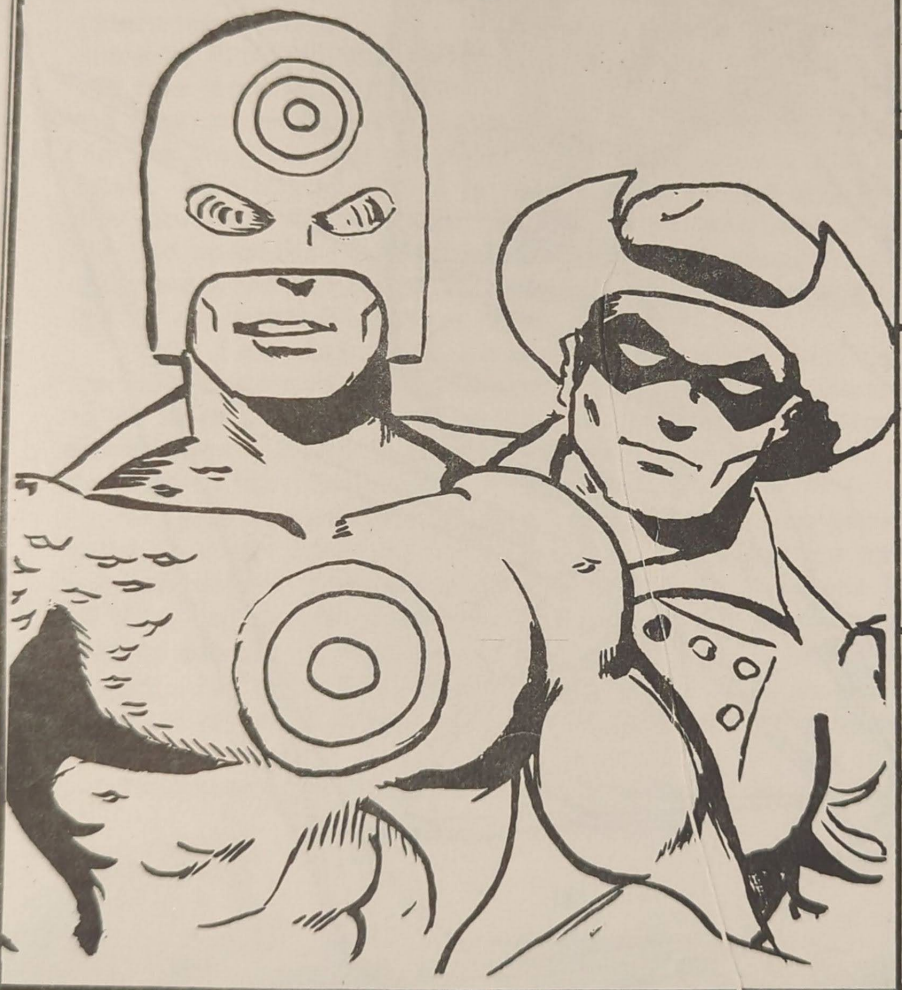

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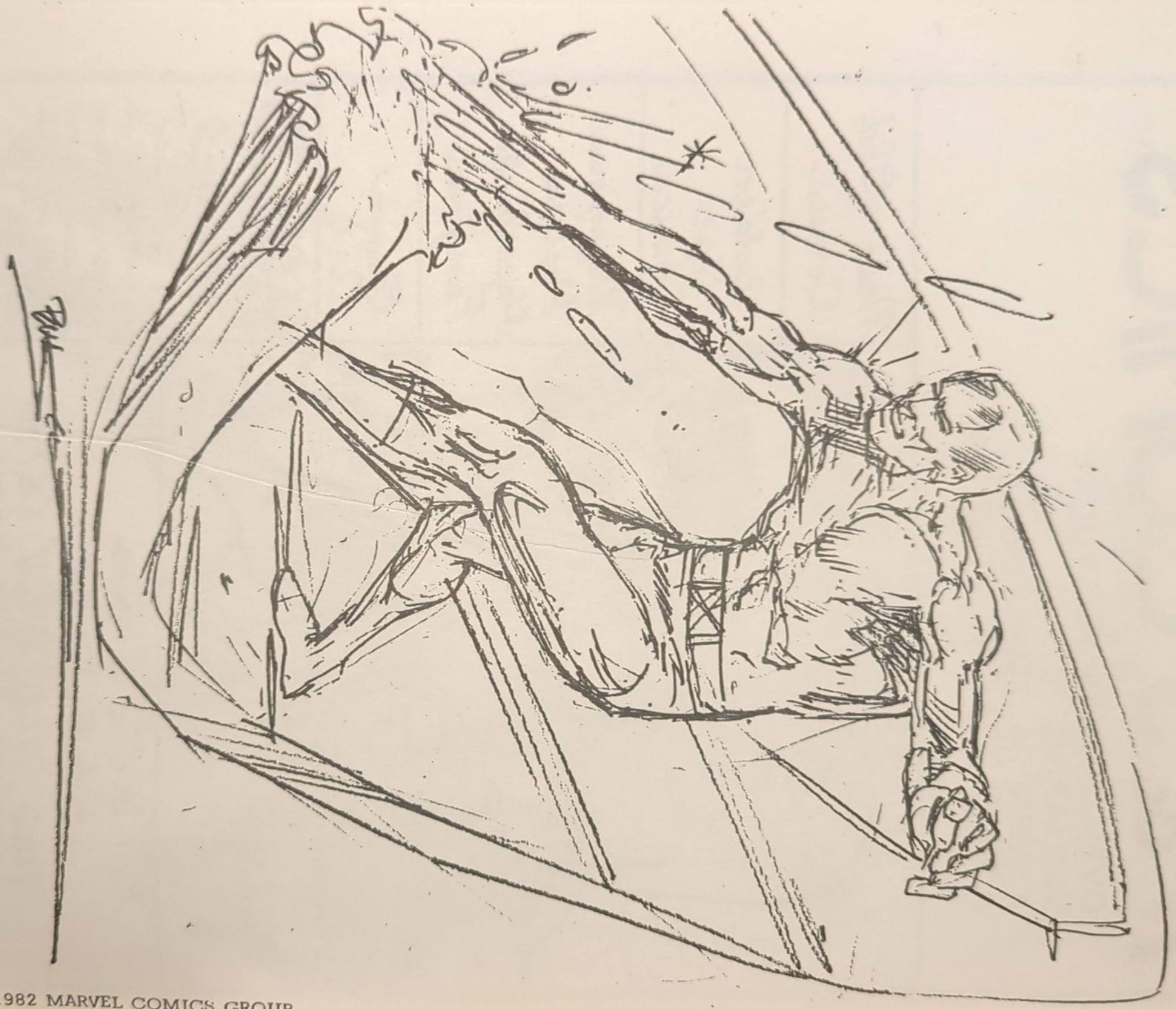

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Dear Reader,

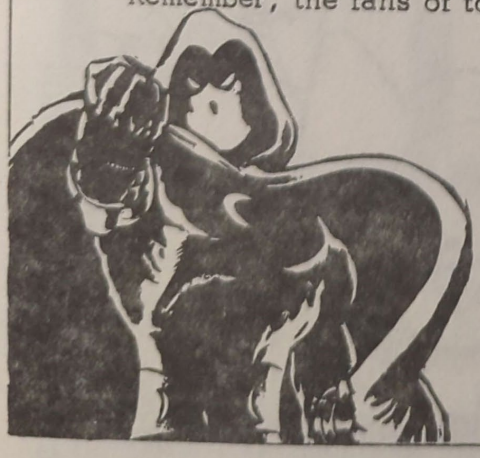
Hello, and welcome to the second big issue of Fandom Feature. We want everyone to know that we here at Feature not only enjoy comics, but take them seriously, thus we have determined to publish the very best comics magazine that we are able to do. It was with this end in mind that the staff sat down and re-organized ourselves along a more conventional business format. Rich Maurizio is now our Executive Director and Art Director, Neil Hansen is General Manager, and I, Robert Sodaro, have taken over as Managing Editor.

Now what this means to you the reader is a smoother approach, and more entertaining format. Now while future issues will undoubtably have opening notes by Rich and Neil, I am glad that I was given this opportunity to speak to you this issue. For I wish to reiterate what was stated in issue #1, that you, the fans can help make us, or break us. We need your help to stay afloat. Buy our product, and check us out, then drop us a line to let us know what you think. As a matter of fact to help you out in that area this issue has a questionaire included, all you need do is fill it out and send it in. We will read every one and consider all suggestions made. Remember, communication is only achieved when information is exchanged, and feedback occurs! Take us seriously, to[illegible] certainly take you seriously.

Well, I am going to climb down off of my soapbox and get on to what you all are really interested in...just what is in store for you in the pages ahead. First up we have an interview with the hot young artist of Moon Knight fame, Bill Sienkiewicz. There is speculation on the new Star Trek movie (due to hit the theaters in June) as well as a brand new Trivia Qiuz

We here on the staff of Fandom Feature are very excited about this issue, and about those to come, as there is a great deal in store for you, the reader. We are dedicated to bringing back the fun in prozines, and you too can be a part of all this, for utimately we are all fans. So if you have any art or articles you want to submit for publication feel free to do so. Send them with a SASE to Fandom Feature, 15 Taylor Rd., Bethel, Ct., 06801, and do not forget to include your name and phone number. All submissions will be considered and originals returned.

Remember, the fans of today will be the pros of tomorrow!



Robert J. Sodaro

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The CONTENTS

FANDOM INFO
X-Men/Teen Titans breakdowns--Black Widow's new look--and more of what's happening in the worlds of comics and movies. Plus a trivia quiz.

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY
A comic book dealer speaks out.

COMIC ART WORKSHOP REVIEW
FF takes a look at the Illustrated Comic Art Workshop.

BILL SIENKIEWICZ INTERVIEW
Fandom Feature talks with Bill Sienkiewicz about Moon Knight and Bill's future plans.

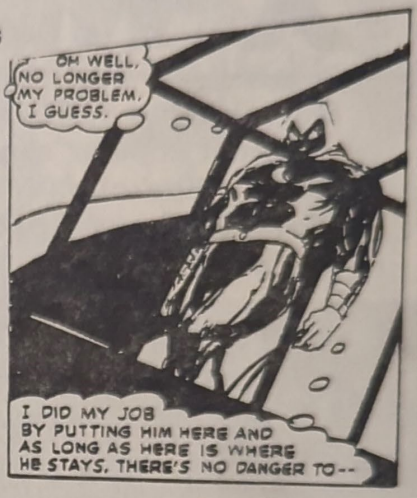
NOT THE BATMAN, AND YET..
Robert J. Sodaro makes a psychological probe of Moon Knight.

CARD CORNER
Jim Main takes a look at James Bond in our gum card section.

STAR TREK II: PICKING UP THE PIECES
An analysis of the return of Star Trek and a conjecture of Spock's future by Colin J. Krapp.

RELEVANCE: IS IT RETURNING?
An overview of relevance from the classic Green Lanterns of the 1970's to today's headlines interpreted by comics by Adam Neilson

FANDOM POLL
We want your opinion!



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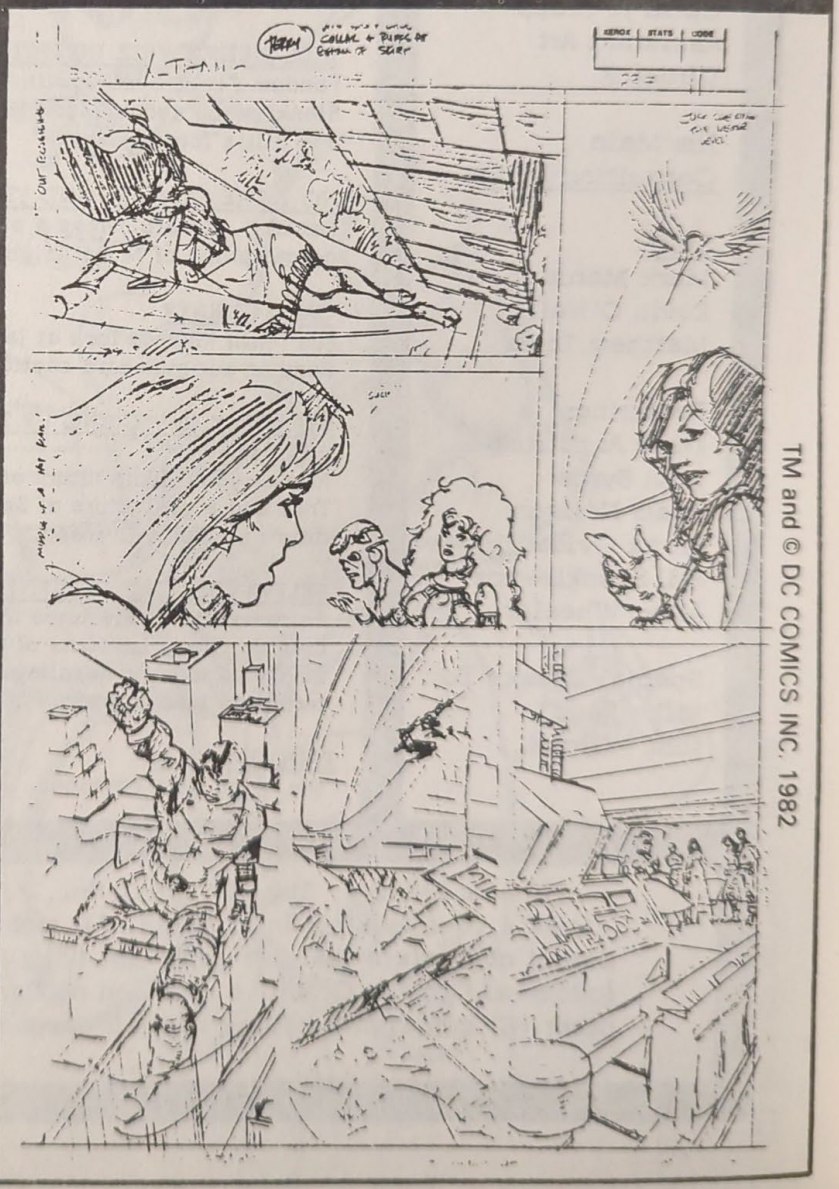
FANDOM INFO

X-MEN & TITANS

Marvel Super Special# 24 features the long awaited meeting of comics two most popular superteams , theX- Men and the New Teen Titans. Titled " Apokolips Now! " This sure - to- be - classic is written by Chris Claremont,. pencilled by Walt Simonson, inked by tTerry Austin, and edited by Louise Jones.

Here are some sample breakdowns of the X-Men/Titans book by Walt Simonson.



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IT'S MILLER TIME!

Miller fans are going to go wild this summer. What If #35 presents "What If Elektra Had Lived?", featuring story, pencils and inks by Frank Miller. Besides the Wolverine mini-series, Miller, who is scheduled to create a direct sales series for DC next spring, will be drawing the new look of Black Widow in Daredevil #187.

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Little Info from Marvel

Mike Golden and Terry Austin do the art chores on Dr. Strange # 55...Ant-Man appears in Avengers #224...Sub-Mariner guest stars in Rom #35...Jim Starlin does the cover of Iron Man #163...Among the heroes that appear in Defenders #112 are: Dr. Strange, Son of Satan, Silver Surfer, Vision, Scarlet Witch, Beast, Valkryie and Sub-Mariner... Incredible Hulk Annual #11 guest stars Spider-Man and the Avengers with art by Rich Buckler and Joe Sinnott... Marvel Two In One Annual #7 features Marvel's most powerful heroes.

DOCTOR STRANGE #55—Written by ROGER STERN. Pencils by MICHAEL GOLDEN. Inks by TERRY AUSTIN. "To Have Loved and Lost!" With Clea gone from his life forever, and his defenses at their lowest ebb, Stephen Strange is attacked by the insidious evil that is . . . D'spayre!

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Little Info From D.C.

The New Adventures of Supergirl #1 debuts in July with art by Carmine Infantino and a Lois Lane backup... Shazam! will have new adventures in Adventure Comics Digest in the foreseeable future with Don Newton art... Legion of Superheroes #294 will be double-sized, completing the Servants of Darkness series that started in #290... Pandora Pann has been canned...Tuska and McLaughlin are doing World's Finest , which now presents full-length stories of Superman and Batman...That leaves Green Arrow homeless for now.. Hawkman will be appearing in Action.

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Two Luthors battle two Supermen in the DC PRESENTS ANNUAL, with art by Rich Buckler and Dave Hunt.

The 20th JLA/JSA Teamup

The Justice League and Justice Society join forces with the All-Star Squadron in '82. The teamup will appear in Justice League#207-209 and All-Star Squadron #14-15. This particular teamup is the first JLA/JSA that has ever involved an outside book.

SUMMER SAGAS

This summer Hollywood is going to try to get those hard earned dollars from America's people with some interesting and exciting movies waiting to be seen.

Starting June's movies is Firefox, in which Clint Eastwood plays an American spy whose mission is to sneak into Russia and steal a top secret jet fighter. It will be out June 18.

Blade Runner, starring Harrison Ford of Star Wars and Raiders of the Lost Ark fame, is a movie about a detective set in the future. It's set for June 25 release.

Conan The Barbarian, the movie based on Robert E. Howard's famed fantasy character starring the extremely muscular Arnold Schwarzenegger is scheduled for a June release. Its fantasy magic story may be expected to make this film a blockbuster hit.

Road Warrior, the sequel to the bloody Australian saga Mad Max, starring Mel Gibson, continues the story about a futuristic cop who mercilessly chases down highway robbers will be out in July.

Megaforce continues the futuristic mercenary theme in June. Barry Bostwick stars as a futuristic mercenary who tries to overthrow an unsteady government headed by Star Trek's Persis Khambatta.

The Secret of Nimh, an MGM/United Artists film animated in the Walt Disney tradition, tells of a mother field mouse and her kids. It will open in June.

Friday The 13TH III is the third film in this gory series. The unusual thing about this picture is that is in 3D.

KIRK & COMPANY RETURN

Star Trek II, the long awaited sequel to Star Trek: The Motion Picture, is coming out in June. Starring William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy and DeForest Kelley in their famed roles as Captain Kirk, Spock and Dr. McCoy, this non-stop action adventure film could be the summer blockbuster of 1982. But the big question is "Will this sequel kill off Spock?" The only way this question will be answered is by seeing the movie.

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TRIVIA TIME

Welcome to the Fandom Feature Trivia Time. In future issues, we will cover many aspects of the industry from serials to comicdom, from the '20's to the '80's. We hope you enjoy finding the answers to the questions that are to follow. We hope to bring back a few memories, and maybe add a little knowledge to one of your favorites that you weren't aware of. Answers will appear next issue.

This is a contest. The first person to send all correct answers by August 5 to Fandom Feature will receive a $5 gift certificate from F & S COMICS AND FANTASY SHOP, 54 Bank Street, New Milford, Ct. 06776. (Staff and advertisers not eligible.)

1. What famous mystery writer worked for Timely in the 1940's? _____
2. Who was the actor that played the Lone Ranger's nephew on the live TV action series? _____
3. Name to date how many Hollywood actors have played Tarzan. _____
4. Name the first actor to play Tarzan and what year he first portrayed him. _____
5. What is Robotman's (of the Doom Patrol) real name? What was his original occupation? _____
6. Who was the very first actor to portray James Bond? _____
7. Who was the voice of Superman in the Max Fleisher cartoons of the 1940's? _____
8. What TV program was that voice host of? _____
9. What TV soap did Christopher Reeve star in? _____
10. Who was the originator of Zorro? And what novel did he first appear in? _____, _____
11. What was the name of Hopalong Cassidy's horse? _____
12. In the 1950's, Hopalong Cassidy endorsed a cookie. What was that cookie? (Hint: His picture was on the front of the box.) _____
13. What superteam was Hulk first a founding member of? _____
14. Who was the first herald of Galatus? _____
15. Who was the creator of Charlie Chan? _____
16. What is the original secret identity of the original Blue Beetle? _____
17. In 1959, Jack Kirby created a Sheild character for Archie publications. Who was it? _____
18. What invention did the creator of Wonder Woman develop? _____
19. Name two characters that appeared with Larry and Moe in the Three Stooges, besides anyone with Curly in their names. _____
20. Who was the actor that played the Shadow in the 1940's serial?
21. What two actors portrayed the Green Hornet in the 1940's series? _____, _____
22. What was the name of the character Steve Ditko created for Charlton?

Contestants must have proof of purchase of this magazine to enter. Please send in the Fandom Poll Page as proof. Send to: Fandom Feature, 15 Taylor Rd., Bethel, Ct. 06801

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY!

By DAVID ARMSTRONG

The comic book business has shown a drastic series of changes in the last few years, brought about primarily by the Direct Sales market. Major companies were reluctant to take the comic book specialty stores seriously when they first appeared, but sales figures and proliferation of alternate publishers (Warp Graphics, Pacific Dist., Capitol City, etc.) have opened their eyes to a new and exciting source of revenue. But as with all other aspects of American society there are those waiting in the wings to capitalize on a good thing over the bodies of Fandom everywhere.

Dazzler #1 was the first direct sales book offered to the Direct Sales market. Its purpose was first to test the waters in the comic speciality stores, and second a way to say "thank you" for the interest in comic material generated by these stores. So many of these were purchased by speculators, dealers and store owners alike that if you ever see this book offered for more than one dollar, it would have to be signed by the entire Marvel bullpen!

Direct sales books are a good idea in that they generate sales for the stores involved and they also allow more adult stories to be developed and give writers and artists more time and freedom to perfect their craft.

Most store owners and dealers who order merchandise from the large distributor receive 40 to 50 percent off cover price according to the amount of merchandise ordered. This gives them better profit margin then almost any other type of business.

It enables them to make a decent living while providing a needed service to their customers. The music business is a classic example of a group of people who spent their way right into the porcelain facility; over priced million dollar contracts with too many unproductive groups, etc. Let's not see this kind of greed crush our business. Kazar, Moon Knight, and Micronauts, since their inception as direct sales titles have been purchased by the thousands. They are not now nor will they ever be rare collector's items. They are fine publications designed with the adult comic reader in mind, and to help the speciality store owner generate new business period!

It is much easier to deal with your local comic book store then having to go through the mail. Comics get lost and battleworn while traveling through the post offices of America. The day you see a book you could have purchased last month at triple its cover price; that's the day you should seriously consider mailing out your subcription, or better yet take a short drive to another town where chances are you will

find a good honest dealer with your interests in mind. Sure, we all want to make a profit. What would be the sense in being in business if you lost money? Take the X-Men. Now, there was a true phenomonon. John Byrne's art work and the interesting story line on this title made it a best seller and a sought after series immediately. They were hard to find and very much in demand. Even the price guide was caught off guard by the incredible price increases in this book. Dealers were paying more for these books to supply that demand; and prices were raised accordingly. Okay, folks! What happens now? Here comes the leeches sucking up the bucks. "Let's find every piece of John Byrne's art which was ever done" they said and escalate its price to match the national debt"--Doomsday #1, Whellie and the Chopper Bunch and Rog 2000. It's the American way;

Find something good and bury it. You see it in television, recordings, video games. Everywhere you look. But you don't have to tolerate it" Just use your God given intelligence and don't pay top dollar for vauleless junk!

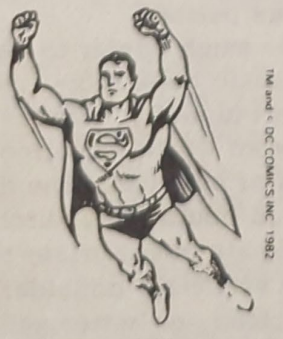
The new kid on the block is Daredevil a fine book by Frank Miller. Granted the story line is perfection and the art is distinctive and interesting. But none of this justifies slapping unholy prices on brand new books on which the ink is not yet dry. Nor does it justify jacking up the price on every back issue comic Miller even drew. Collectors ' items are those books which are truly hard to find, not books where every dealer and store owner in America have a stack of them. How can we stop it?

First, find a good store. One with knowlegable personel who will hold new books for you when they arrive. Don't pay ridiculous prices for new merchandise. Don't listen to the "Well if you want it, that's my price. You can't find it anywhere else, its Direct Sales " line. That's bull! You can always find it somewhere else. Usually at a much better price. Support your local comic book dealer! Go to the conventions! Don't stop at the first table and buy something. Shop around! You can tell the good from the bad just by talking to them awhile. There will always be those who line their pockets with gold at the expense of young kids who can be talked out of anything. Just as there will always be honest dealers who genuainly like what they do, who read and collect comics as well as sell them. The good people are out there. Its up to you the fan to separate "THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY."

QUIZ

The object of this quiz is for you to define the relationships of a pair of heroes. Example: If the names "Jor-El-Lara" are presented, you would answer "husband- wife".

answer pg. 44



1. Cyclops-Havok
2. Fritzi Ritz-Nancy
3. Capt. Marvel Jr.-Kid Eternity
4. Star Spangled Kid-Merry, Girl of a Thousand Gimmicks
5. Dick Tracy- Bonnie Braids
6. Changeling-Mento
7. Speedy-Guardian
8. D'Artagnan-Warlord
9. John Carter- Carthoris of Mars
10. Jimmy Olsen-Marco Polo
11. Black Lightning-Lynn Stewart
12. Two-Face- Harlequin
13. Emporer Ming-Prince Barin
14. Lois Lane- Suzie Tompkins
15. NoMan- Dr. Anthony Dunn
16. Sif- Jane Foster
17. James Bond-Contessa Theresa
18. Space Ghost- Jan & Jayce
19. Superman- Jon Hudson

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fandom feature REVIEWS

THE COMIC ART WORKSHOP

In the issue #1, we at FANDOM FEATURE discussed the ILLUSTRATED COMIC ART WORKSHOP with Gary Brodsky. We talked with Gary about the ideas behind this four book "how to draw comics" series, how it was conceived--its formations and such--and other projects coming from Garco Systems. All of fandom has been waiting for this series to come out. Now that it has, FANDOM FEATURE is going to take a look at the ILLUSTRATED COMIC ART WORKSHOP.

Before we go right to the review, we are going to go into some of the things behind the WORKSHOP. This four volume series was inspired by Dick Giordano's and Frank McLaughlin's Comic Art Workshop, in which the two artists taught comic art classes, which utilized such things as tools of the trade, persective, mass, anatomy story-telling and other things needed in comics.

Things started occurring which ended the Comic Art Workshop, such as Dick Giordano becoming an editor at DC Comics and Frank McLaughlin's art load being heavier and heavier. And with this, there were no more classes, no way for interested students to learn and develop their craft.

At this time, Gary Brodsky, knowing of this class, decided that maybe Dick and Frank could utilize all of the lessons they taught, and publish an Illustrated Comic Art Workshop.

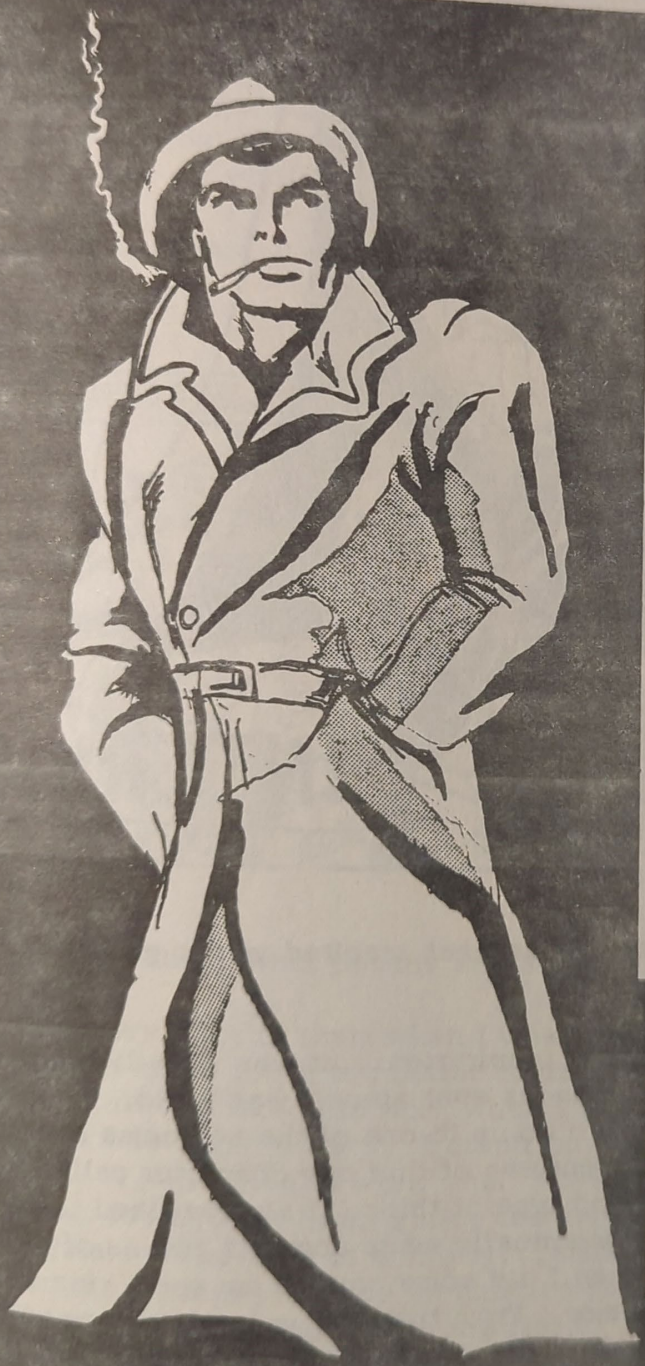
"When I was younger, I wanted to get into drawing comic books. I was always walking around, being that my father, Sol Brodsky, was working there. Some of the people gave me advice and help, such as how to make this face fit with this figure. When I stayed out of comics and got into the business of publishing and making toys, I said to myself, "There must be a lot of people out there that haven't gotten the pieces of information I learned." So I contacted Dick, John (Romita) and Frank and started putting out a book on it."

Issue #1 is subtitled "Basics". And basics is definitely what this first volume is all about. The book discusses how to set up a good studio, what tools the artist can use, perspective, and how to draw the figure. One advantage of this book is that it is not written in a textbooky, type style. Rather, the book seems to be more of a discussion, than an out and out lecture. In fact, occasionally it jokes. When Frank discusses the T square, he mentions a very good use for it. "When held at the bottom end and placed over the shoulder at the proper angle, it makes a great back scratcher."

If you are truly interested in learning how to draw comics, these references are a definite must.

It's good to see a "how to draw comics' series that may inspire new artists into the field. Whatever you learn from this book, you can apply immediately. Even if you are only interested in how comics are drawn, this is the best reference on the subject.

YESTERYEAR'S COLLECTIBLES



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BILL SIENKIEWICZ

INTERVIEW

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FANDOM FEATURE: Bill, could you first tell us what inspired you to go into the comic illustrating field?

Bill Seinkiewicz: I don't know if it was an inspiration...it was more like a natural progression of things. I had been doing comics ever since I was a kid. I use to go to my grandmother's; and every weekend I'd go up to one of the bedrooms and draw on notebook paper. I use to draw the adventures of this one character called "Jim Gordon", who is a private eye, James Bond type of thing. I always liked to draw and so I made up these little stories. I eventually made about 12 issues of this guy up until I went into the eighth grade. Then I did some comics for some kids in high school, with typical sophomoric type humor. From there, I went to college where I took up advertising, illustration, painting, and stopped doing comics. And about my second year of college I got into "Watch Out" publications, which was a kind

of fanzine...a college stab at comics...producing something in a comic book vein.

I had a group of friends who were going to graduate. And my work was good enough that I didn't have to sit through another year there, with the people in my class who were of the attitude that it was a joke...a way to get easy credits. And I just didn't want to sit around there when I could be making money. So I thought to myself, "If my group of graduating friends could do it, so could I". "Watch Out" had gotten me back into comics, so I decided that I'd give it a try. I went home and did up this portfolio of old D.C. characters, and the next month I went to New York to meet Vince Colletta and he said my stuff was just fine. But he couldn't use me then because this was the time of the "implosion!" So he called up Neal (Adams) and I went over to see him. He liked my stuff and called up Jim Shooter. I went over to Marvel where they had this opening for "Moon Knight", which I knew nothing about, but I decided to take it on. I really like the character. That was basically the progression of things. It wasn't as if I had wanted to do comics all my life. I did when I was eight years old. I remember telling my father I wanted to do this for a living, but I was lucky enough to go to college and find out other things, rather than make my whole life comic books.

F.F. So, as you say, it was a natural progression, one thing led to another.

B.S. Right

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F.F. Can you tell us what comics and artists interested you in your youth?

B.S. There were a lot of them when I was younger. There were the D.C. comics which I thought had a lot of the better characters. As far as artists go, there was Curt Swan. I always liked his work when I was younger. And then I saw Neal's work when he was doing covers. I didn't buy those comics because of the covers; I hated them. I hated Neal's work when I first saw it...it was weird and too real. I was used to seeing Curt Swan's nice feathered work and then Neal came along with all this angular, weird type of anatomy...macabre stuff. And it wasn't until I saw his work on the insides; the way he handled people and emotions. When people get hit, their face would move with the fist.

There was Kirby, Who was sheer power and there was Swan who was everything I needed back then and Neal who would bring this sense of logic into his stuff. A natural way, where if someone was hit, his face would move or if he was thrown into the dirt, his clothes would tear; a natural action and reaction. And I liked it. It said something to me. And when I started reading the letters from the readers who said things like, "I like the way he draws people", or how fantastic his work was that's when I started drawing people ... his way, using subtle things like having people biting their lips. All the real work isn't really all that subtle, it's more open. And he started to do more of the subtle things when he added things to the faces... and that's when I started buying all his work.

The question you asked me about the books...the ones that interested me at that time..."World's Finest", back then...The Kirby stuff, I read a lot of his stuff; The Inhumans and the F.F. And that was about it. There was a lot I didn't read, because it didn't make much of an impression on me. I read most of the major titles of both companies.

F.F. Getting back to Neal Adams...would you say then that he was the basic influence in your work then?

B.S. Yeah, he was. Like I was saying before ... Curt Swan is a fantastic artist, but the way I started out at the time I needed more than good composition and good drawing. I needed some kind of real strong, weird guts type of drawing. I never really latched onto Neal Adams' Deadman stuff until later on, but his work on Green Lantern and on Batman, that was the stuff that I liked. He drew the Batman the way I thought he should be drawn.

He was a big influence because of his viewpoint of things. He wouldn't opt for the easy shots...he would go underneath things. His storytelling may not have been so fantastic, but I forgot all that when I looked at his drawing. Yeah, I'd have to say that he was a very big influence.

F.F. What was your first assignment at Marvel?

B.S. Well, my first assignment...they offered me "Moon Knight" as soon as I walked in, which was for the Marvel color mags. But Jim Shooter wanted me to do this three page story first, which he had kept around. It was a "Shanna" story by Steve Gerber, which I don't know if it ever saw print. And I did the three pages of it and they liked it. And Shooter gave me some more pointers and from there I had the "Moon Knight" script right after Gene Colan. And I had worked with Doug (Moench). And I think I've worked with Doug on every story I've done...except for Ralph Maccio. That was on a Lilith story.

F.F. Didn't you also do "Star-Lord?"

B.S. Right I did a "Star-Lord" story with inks by McCleod.

F.F. Was that before "Moon Knight" or...

FEELS GOOD TO GET AWAY FROM THE BIG APPLE-- AND OUT FROM UNDER THE SHADOW OF MOON KNIGHT. AFTER ALL, MY ALTER-EGO WILL HARDLY BE PRESSED INTO SERVICE OUT HERE IN THE MELLOW COUNTRY...
AN ECLIPSE, WANING

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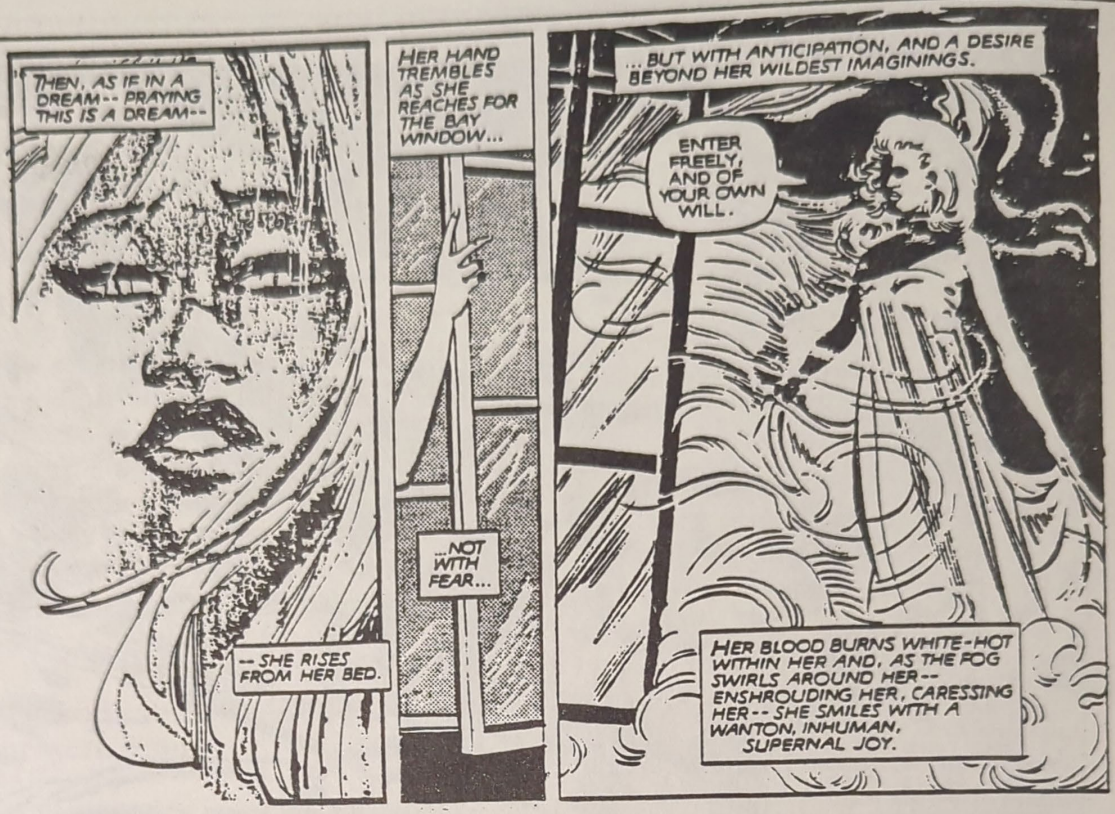
B.S....during. It was during. I had a break somewhere and they asked if I wanted to try it and I said, "Sure."

F.F. Get any work you can.
(gen. laughter)

B.S. Right. When I first came in they offered me "Moon Knight". Then they asked me if I wanted to do the "Hulk." I said, "Every kid wants to do the Hulk at one time or another." Now I would opt for not doing the "Hulk." It's not that I don't like the character, it's just that it's not the type of mood that I want to get across. I like really moody things. I guess there's some Berni Wrightson in me too. But when they started offering me guest shots...I was comfortable with just doing "Moon Knight" and then they had me work something else in to play around a little bit.

F.F. Like, for example, the issue of "Moon Knight" with Daredevil?

B.S. Yes, that's what I mean.


THEN, AS IF IN A DREAM-- PRAYING THIS IS A DREAM--
-- SHE RISES FROM HER BED.
HER HAND TREMBLES AS SHE REACHES FOR THE BAY WINDOW...
...NOT WITH FEAR...
... BUT WITH ANTICIPATION, AND A DESIRE BEYOND HER WILDEST IMAGININGS.
ENTER FREELY, AND OF YOUR OWN WILL.
HER BLOOD BURNS WHITE-HOT WITHIN HER AND, AS THE FOG SWIRLS AROUND HER-- ENSHROUDING HER, CARESSING HER-- SHE SMILES WITH A WANTON, INHUMAN, SUPERNAL JOY.

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F.F. Can you tell us how "Moon Knight" is approached from the writer, Doug Meonch, to you, the artist.

B.S. You mean, how I...

F.F....just basically how the system is.

B.S. Oh, I guess that's just the Marvel style. Doug will write up a plot outline and send it over to the editors. And then Denny O'Neil will read it over and any changes to be made. From there I break down page by page. And right now I'm working from breakdowns since I'm inking my own stuff now. And depending on the deadline, I'll draw and ink my own stuff directly and send it in so I'm doing everything but the baloons which are pasted up later.

F.F. How much of the storytelling do you have control over?

B.S. It depends. Doug and I try to talk it over as much as possible with things that we'd like to see that I can get interested in doing. If there's too much that Doug wants in a page, I'll either combine or if there's a panel that I want to really play up, I'll pace it just so...like the last page in "Moon Knight" #7, I think it was where Marlene is chrouched in the water. That was originally to be one small panel on the last page, but I speeded things up earlier, by using split panel techniques, which in reality and illusion had him on the subway and also on the moon. That allowed me space at the end to zap people with the big clincher.

Marlene is one of my favorite characters. Stan Drake has been helping me out with all these pointers on women.

Plus, there was a kind of Hichcock thing in this...I really like moody type of work. That intriques me a lot more than having two guys in costume fighting each

B.S....other. I'd rather see what makes these people tick then have the action go from that, rather than just a gratuitous fight...there has to be a motive...but I like the really moody stuff.

F.F. Bill, how would you explain "Moon Knights" popularity?

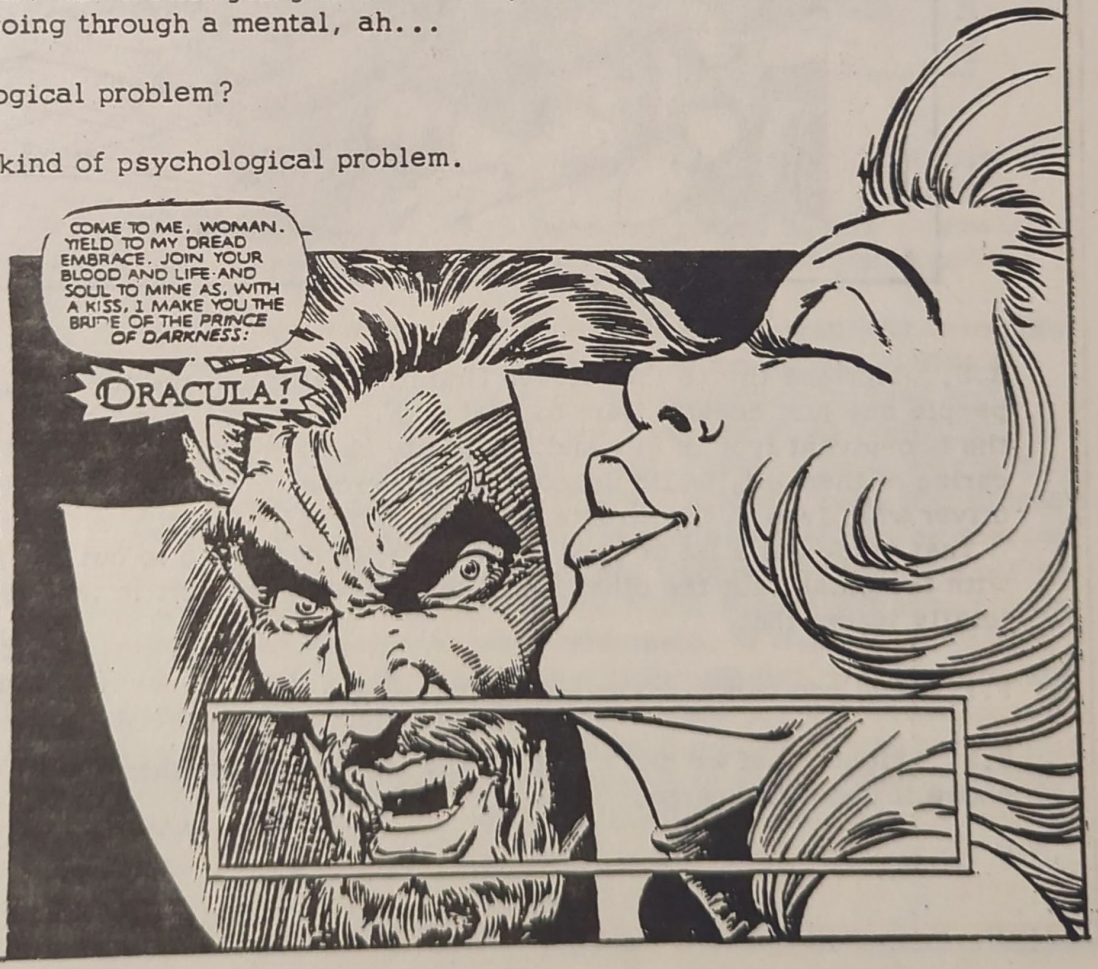
B.S. I don't know. I've tried to justify it, but I guess it's that I'm just trying to do the kinds of books that I'd like to read and hope that there are others that like the same stuff. I suppose that there's probably a lot of the pulp stuff in there and not to mention "Batman", but there was a whole part that I was trying to bring in and that was that I wanted to make him more of a moodier character than he had been. There's always a dark side to everybody and this guy has four of them. I worked on a story where " Moon Knight" is getting these headaches and he supposedly shot this visiting diplomat. It's where one of his alter egos is taking over and turning bad. That's the type of thing I like to work on. I want to start handling "Moon Knight" a little bit more...not abstract like Alex Toth...but play heavy on the blacks and go more for the gothic. Because he's got other identities to offset that, so I want to establish a greater contrast between the other three and "Moon Knight". And I think the alternate identities play a big part in his popularity. They get to see more than just Clark Kent/Superman.

F.F. I heard that they were going to resolve the identity bit.

B.S. Yes and no. He's still going to have them, but there was a whole thing where he was going through a mental, ah...

F.F...psychological problem?

B.S. Right. A kind of psychological problem.


COME TO ME, WOMAN. YIELD TO MY DREAD EMBRACE. JOIN YOUR BLOOD AND LIFE AND SOUL TO MINE AS, WITH A KISS, I MAKE YOU THE BRIDE OF THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS!
DRACULA!

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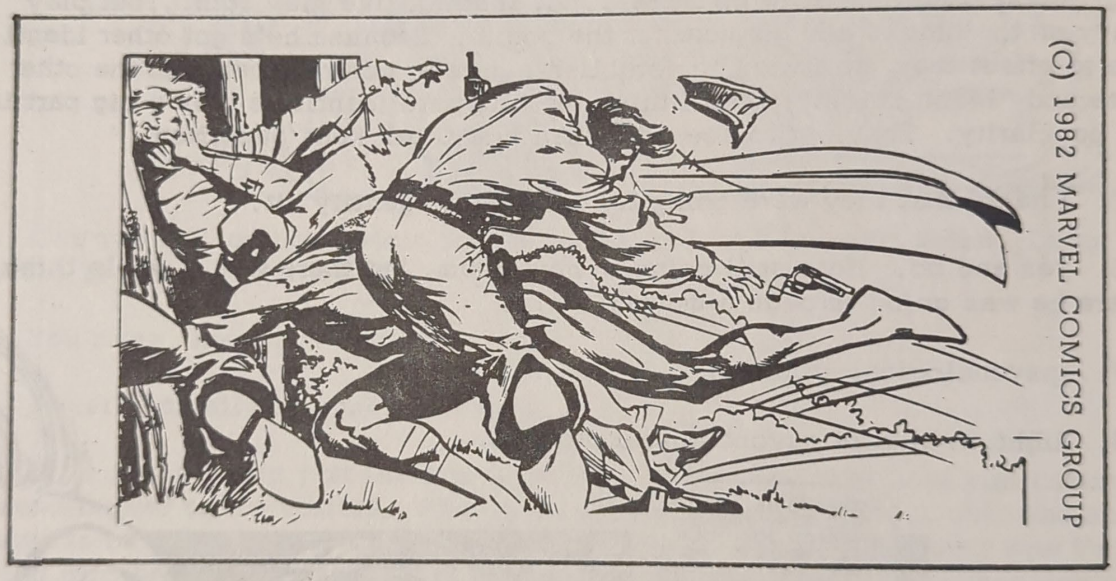
B.S. Doug and I wanted to play up that aspect, but we ran into some problems with that. They wanted it resolved as quickly as possible and get it back to being more action oriented. It's a good psychological book, but it's supposed to be an action book. We'll still come back to it every now and then. I mean we can't just totally ignore the fact that he has all these other characters inside of him, like Sybil couldn't ignore all the characters inside of her. But in the long run, it's taken a back seat to the super-oriented villians than of the psychos.

F.F. I remember that particular issue of "Moon Knight" where these criminals poured these chemicals into the water supply...some kind of halucinogin and Marlene was eventually effected by it. And by that effect, her true feelings for "Moon Knight" and his other identities came out. I thought that was a great book.

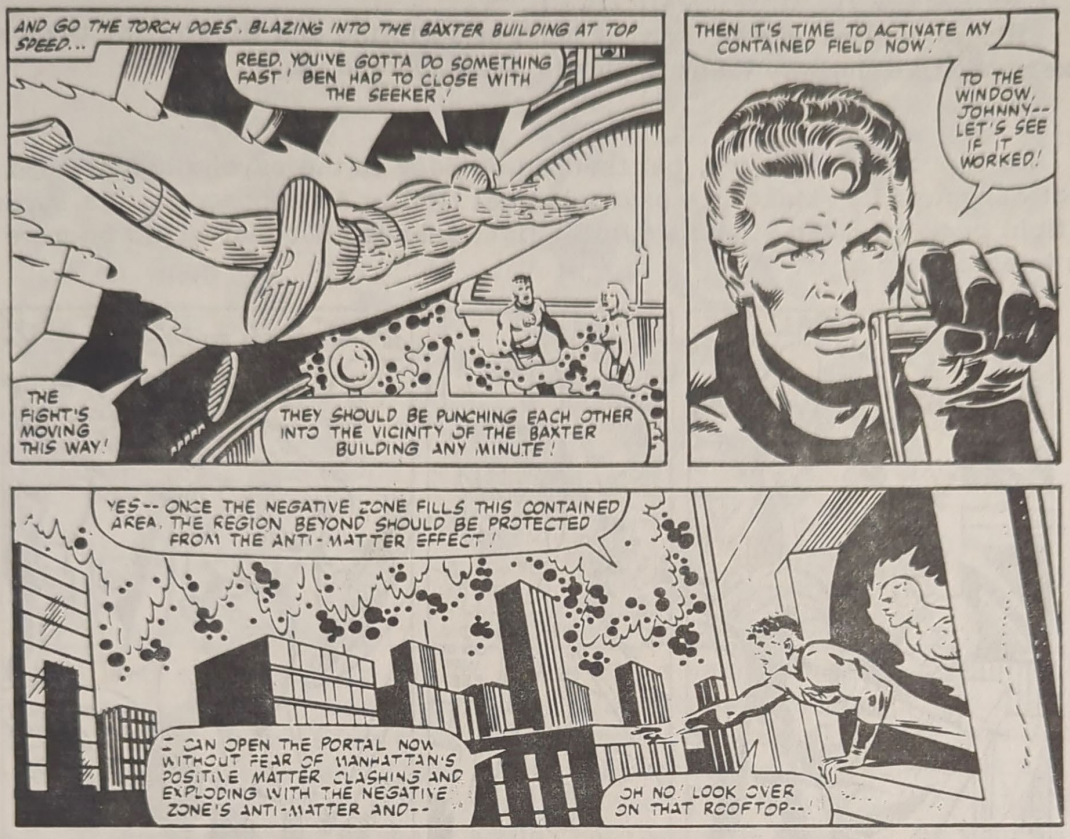


B.S. Marlene thinks that Steven Grant is really him and the other people are people she just doesn't want to deal with. She'll call him Steven all the time. He's the bon-vivant type of guy and she really cares for him...he's the most human and caring of them all, while Spector is the mercenary and Lockley is the grungy cab driver who lives in the streets. So she can really identify with Steven the most.

That issue got a lot of good reaction, with her trying to cut up "Moon Knight" with the glass, but the other identities played a big part in that, so we just can't totally ignore that.

F.F. And you can't let her ignore that either.

B.S. Right. And we can't just let the readers ignore that either. We can't just shove it under the carpet.


AND GO THE TORCH DOES. BLAZING INTO THE BAXTER BUILDING AT TOP SPEED...
REED, YOU'VE GOTTA DO SOMETHING FAST! BEN HAD TO CLOSE WITH THE SEEKER!
THE FIGHT'S MOVING THIS WAY!
THEY SHOULD BE PUNCHING EACH OTHER INTO THE VICINITY OF THE BAXTER BUILDING ANY MINUTE!
THEN IT'S TIME TO ACTIVATE MY CONTAINED FIELD NOW!
TO THE WINDOW, JOHNNY--LET'S SEE IF IT WORKED!
YES-- ONCE THE NEGATIVE ZONE FILLS THIS CONTAINED AREA, THE REGION BEYOND SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM THE ANTI-MATTER EFFECT!
I CAN OPEN THE PORTAL NOW WITHOUT FEAR OF MANHATTAN'S POSITIVE MATTER CLASHING AND EXPLODING WITH THE NEGATIVE ZONE'S ANTI-MATTER AND--
OH NO! LOOK OVER ON THAT ROOFTOP--!

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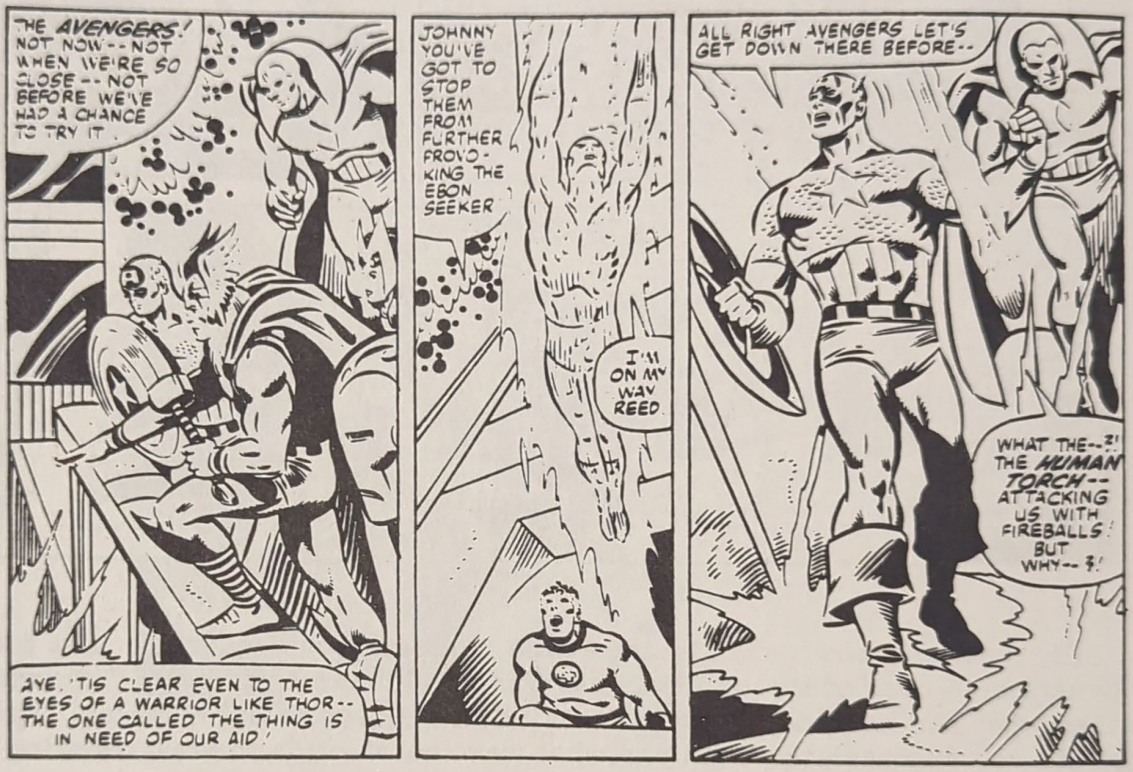
F.F. Bill, moving along, you illustrated the Fantastic Four recently, just prior to John Byrne's take over of the book in what was considered a radically different style than what had been done previously by Kirby, Buscema and Buckler. How exactly did you approach the book and what was the reaction to your handling?

B.S. Well, to start off with, the reader reaction from what I've read was favorable I enjoyed doing the book because it was almost like a playtime for me. I didn't come in and try to do a Kirby trip. I tried to play up the stretching on Reed and I knew that Franklin was going to be involved with the story more, so I tried to draw him as cute as possible. I just went in with the attitude, "Okay, I'm doing the F.F. now, so I'll just do it...I'm not going to agnoize over it, 'cause I know that Sinnot's going to be inking it and if there's going to be any visual discrepencies, he's going to be covering them up." Through all the pencillers and people that have worked on it, except for John Byrne now, who is inking his own stuff, Sinnot was actually the artist on the Fantastic Four. No matter who was underneath, it was Sinnot who would give the unity to it. So when I would go out a little angular, he would go and soften it up. So as far as my work was concerned, I was just doing layouts... breakdowns. But I did have a good time with it...doing a group of super heros. "Moon-Knight" was more of a personal commitment, where I wanted to get the psychological mood, where, with the F.F., you didn't get that deep.

F.F. Bill, would you like to try your hand at scripting and illustrating the comic? For example, like the way Frank Miller is doing Daredevil.

B.S. I'd like to give it a try, but then I'd go back to the psychological. I'd play up that aspect of it. Make it a psychological thriller as opposed to...a super-hero fight book. I mean, there would be fight scenes, but that would be more of an integral part of it.


THE AVENGERS! NOT NOW--NOT WHEN WE'RE SO CLOSE--NOT BEFORE WE'VE HAD A CHANCE TO TRY IT.
AYE, 'TIS CLEAR EVEN TO THE EYES OF A WARRIOR LIKE THOR--THE ONE CALLED THE THING IS IN NEED OF OUR AID!
JOHNNY YOU'VE GOT TO STOP THEM FROM FURTHER PROVOKING THE EBON SEEKER
I'LL ON MY WAY REED
ALL RIGHT AVENGERS LET'S GET DOWN THERE BEFORE--
WHAT THE--?! THE HUMAN TORCH--ATTACKING US WITH FIREBALLS! BUT WHY--?!

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F.F. What, in your opinion, makes a good comic book?

B.S. I'd have to say that there's probably a whole slew of things. One of them being the intangible thing that makes it sell, when nobody thinks it's going to sell. You can do all the research you want and say, "If we do this, it's going to sell" and it may bomb. It's like that old saying that if you put a dog, a pretty girl and a boy on the cover it'll sell. That may not be true, because from underneath, it could develop a cult following. People in charge may not have their eye on you as seriously as possible, they may not deem it worthwhile. When, all of a sudden you'll be doing something different and it hits...it clicks. And it's probably one of those things where you probably have good artwork in a sense. And recognizable figures...things like that. Plus, a personality that has to come through the book, because if its inconsistant from one issue to the next it'll tend to turn people off. And good writing is a must; you need good writing.

It's all those things and like I said, the intangible...you never know quite what's going to sell. There's been times that I've drawn stuff that I thought was

AS I TOLD THE CHILD, THAT PLOY IS USELESS...
...UNLESS YOU TRULY BELIEVE.
IN THAT CASE, VAMPYR, YOUR CAUSE IS LOST--
--FOR I BELIEVE!
YAHHRRR!
YOU... HAVE HURT ME, NIGHTCRAWLER, BUT I AM FAR FROM BEATEN.
MY POWERS ARE LEGION! WITH BUT A THOUGHT, I CAN SUMMON LIGHTNING FROM THE HEAVENS!
YIKES!
BAMF
BAMF

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pretty awful, and every time I'd see it, I'd be like a vampire with a cross, saying "Get this away from me." (general laughter)...and it would sell well and I can't figure it out. While at the same time I knock myself out and get really into it and get the feedback I want to hear. Like I sweated over it and they enjoyed it and that makes it all worthwhile. Then there were times that I pushed on it, and kind of dismissed it, and never wanted to see it again, but they still liked it. So I guess that there's some kind of odd consistency to it.

F.F. What kind of suggestions can you give to those aspiring artists out there, wanting to break into the comic illustrating field?

B.S. One thing I should start off with is...I get a lot of people talking to me about portfolios. One thing I must stress is to study anatomy...not just John Byrne, or my work, because what they're doing is learning my mistake as well as their own. When I started looking at Neal's work, I also jumped into Briggeman and Victor Perard and Looms. All different anatomy books to learn it as well.

F.F. Wasn't Bridgeman one of Adams' big influences?

B.S. Possibly. Probably. You have to learn it from there as well as taking classes that'll help them learn. And also, study films and television shows to learn how they tell the story. There is a whole variety of different storytelling techniques. Take (Frank) Millers storytelling technique, which is a lot more graphic and abstract. He develops his own sense of time. All the panels, all the sound effects and all the characters or figures; he'll work them in a combined movement and get this kind of harmony that works really well and becomes an essence of reality, where I try and go for the realism. That's where Frank and I differ, but we try to handle it the best way that we can. Will Eisner, who was a real big influence for Frank, sets

Why do we have X-Men breakdowns? It shows Bill's versatility as an artist and storyteller. Besides, we thought all you X-Men fans would appreciate it. Special thanks to Louise Jones for letting us use the breakdowns.

B.S....things up a lot differently than someone else, like Russ Heath. So there are many avenues to go in and to limit yourself to one thing, that's one of the things I did when I was young when I started to go headlong into one direction. And now I'm finding out that that's not the direction I want to go. I want to grow to diversity, to come into my own, because people are saying, " Oh, he's just a Neal Adams' clone which hurts me tremendously, because that may have been true for awhile, but now I'm starting to pull things in from other areas and learning from other sources.

F.F. You can see that in your recent work.

B.S. I try to handle storytelling differently from Neal. And the professionals around my studio area are a big help.

F.F. What should aspiring comic artists have in their portfolio?

B.S. One of the best things that they can do is to take a story that the've read, and it may be a story that they didn't really like, or a story that they liked, but didn't like the art and take three pages and re-draw it, telling the story the way

they would tell the story and drawing in their own style, using the angles, maybe indicating where the balloons are, and bring the comic in with them and show how they would do it, in their own way. Other things to bring maybe would be inking samples...three pages of inking samples. And also maybe character pin-ups. And if they're thinking of doing comics, they shouldn't be thinking of doing someone elses idea of anatomy. They should go to sources...learn composition...fine art...take the whole gamut. Don't do aping fight scenes with two figures...because two figures in costume in fight scenes you can handle really easy, but what happens when you come to having to do just three pages of characters who just talk?

F.F. That's when studing facial expressions and using all those little subtleties come in.

B.S. Exactly. That's when you have to have them doing incidental things. Holding a cup of coffee, fixing their tie, small things that help the story move along and make the scene visually interesting. Those are things people like to see.

F.F. Bill, would you like to do a syndicated strip?

B.S. Oh, sure. If opportunity ever arose I'd jump at it. But, I'd have to weigh my obligations, because, right now "Moon Knight", has increased in pages, I want to get some more free time to get involved with my illustrations. I want to get some stuff into things like Sports Illustrated and other markets...do comics just because I like them, not because its the only thing I can do. Do something besides comics. And the more that you know and bring in from outside sources, if you focus this on just one place you'll have a certain flavor to it. And anything you learn will help, in one way or another.

F.F. Bill, there's no question to "Moon Knights'" popularity, because the book has gone direct sales. How do you feel about this marketing move?

B.S. At first, I was a little reticent about it. I didn't understand what it would entail, but in the long run, I think it'll work out for the best. I'll be able to do wrap-around covers and there won't be any ads, maybe just house ads, so it won't mess up the story where you flip every two pages or so and find an ad. And I'll be able to do double pages and we'll be able to develop better stories...longer stories. So I think its going to be for the better. Since the books are already sold it'll mean we can try something that we don't have to worry about.

F.F. What exactly are your opinions on the newer artists at Marvel, like Brent Anderson and Frank Miller?

B.S. They are very good. They're learning. I think that they are both going to be great. When Frank came in, he said he had a couple of kinks in his art. But now he's gotten his storytelling worked up to such a point, where he's now going back and studing anatomy and photos, where he can become a total comic book artist. And Brent is just growing leaps and bounds with Kazar. They're really fantastic. And they're really great guys too.

We're all going through the same thing as far as learning. Brent was influenced by Neal, as was I, but he was also influenced by Al Williamson. Now, he's changing and becoming Brent Anderson, he's working more towards his identity, so that his style won't be confused with anybody else...I don't think he's having that problem. I assume that people don't have that trouble with mine either, but I don't know. I look at some of my work and say, "Oh, there's too much Neal in there", but that's

BUT...BUT WHY?! WHY HAVE MY ENEMIES DONE THIS--?!
SEE ME AND HEAR ME EBON SEEKER--AND FEEL THE TRUTH OF MY MESSAGE.
YOU MUST ACCEPT YOUR FATE.
WHERE ONCE YOU WERE A MAN WHO SOUGHT LIFE IN PEACE, TO COMMUNE WITH THAT LIFE IN AN EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND KNOWLEDGE--
--NOW YOU HAVE BECOME AN ELEMENTAL BEING OF SHEER DESTRUCTION SEEKING LIFE ONLY TO END IT.

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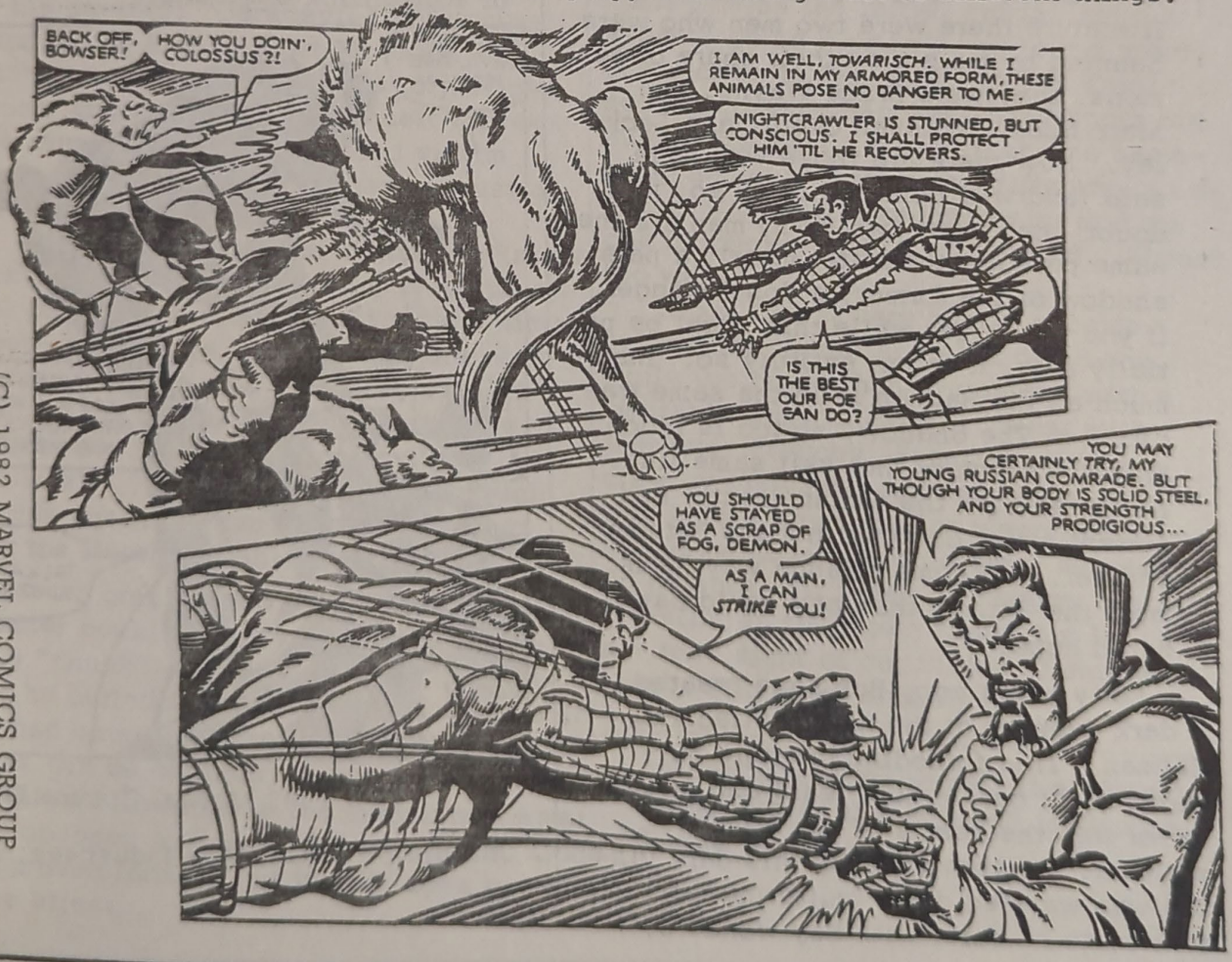
from drawing like Neal ever since I was 11, so actually, that's my kind of style of drawing. But what I do is expand on that, break into other things, keep the stuff I learned from him and design the stuff form this guy. Whatever I look at I try to soak it in, and ask myself, "How can I handle this in the best way?" And I think that's what we're all trying to do.

F.F. Is there anything else you'd like to do besides comics?

B.S. Yes. I'd like to do illustrations...magazine covers...color work. Stuff that's not just comic book oriented, so that I can feel I'm growing in all different areas as opposed to just one. Not just getting good with the pencil, and good with the pen and ink, but I want to do color. And there's things I want to try even in "Moon Knight", where it's not all type of rendering stuff...like maybe do Marlene like a Greenhill type fashion drawing. Maybe juice it up a little bit. That's basically it.

F.F. Bill, finally, what should we look for from you in the future?

B.S. Well, I'm sure you can find my artwork in "Moon Knight", but to answer your question, ask me the next time you see me, because I'm going to be finding out what I'm going to be doing myself. I'm really hyped on doing a lot of different things.


BACK OFF, BOWSER!
HOW YOU DOIN', COLOSSUS?!
I AM WELL, TOVARISCH. WHILE I REMAIN IN MY ARMORED FORM, THESE ANIMALS POSE NO DANGER TO ME.
NIGHTCRAWLER IS STUNNED, BUT CONSCIOUS. I SHALL PROTECT HIM 'TIL HE RECOVERS.
IS THIS THE BEST OUR FOE CAN DO?
YOU MAY CERTAINLY TRY, MY YOUNG RUSSIAN COMRADE. BUT THOUGH YOUR BODY IS SOLID STEEL, AND YOUR STRENGTH PRODIGIOUS...
YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED AS A SCRAP OF FOG, DEMON.
AS A MAN, I CAN STRIKE YOU!

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NOT THE BATMAN AND YET... by Bob Sodaro

"...The full moon is calling, the fever is hot,
and the wicked wind whispers and moans;
you've got your demons, you've got desires,
but I've got a few of my own."

In their 1976 rock and roll hit One of These Nights, Don Henley and Glen Frey were neither speaking of the cowled crusader who prowls the dark streets of Gotham City nor his illegitimate offspring who likewise haunts the byways of New York. But they very well could have been. For if ever in the annals of literature there were two men who were haunted by more than their share of demons, they were Bruce Wayne, and Marc Spector/Steven Grant/Jake Lockley. Now there are those who have said (and will continue to do so, no doubt) that these two (four) men are the same person--the latter mearly a pale shadow of the former, a doppleganger if you will. Yet while this might be partially true, it is not entirely so. Inasmuch as the Batman is in the same tradition of The Shadow, so too is Moon Knight a scion of that self same line. He is (as both the writer/creator and current artist contend) not the Batman and yet...in some strange way he is more the Batman than any could have dared hope.

Forty years ago, Bob Kane created a dark avenger of the night called The Batman. This forboding creature mirrored all of our darkest fears and struck terror into the hearts of the criminal element. As time went by this dark vision was watered down (quite inadvertantly, to be sure) with boy wonders, bat devices, etc to such an extent that the vision became quite a sight. Since his inception the only creative hands to mold a true vision of the darknight detective (other than Kane's) were the O'Neil/Adams and Englehart/Rogers teams. (And is once more coming into his own under the capable direction of editor Dick Giordano).

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Seven years ago, Doug Moench had that same dark vision and from it came the Moon Knight. Despite what Steven Grant says about Moon Knight in issue #2 that he (Moon Knight) "...is pure--a primal force stripped of emotion...," Moon Knight is more emotionally charged than perhaps any other character in the Marvel line (and perhaps even more than his darknight sire). He fights crime not for a lark (as Spider-Man primarily does), nor for money (as do Powerman and Iron Fist), but rather because he is driven by a force more powerful than himself.

Whatever this "thing" is*--call it fate, kismet, or whatever--Moon Knight is a dark, driven, spectral phantasm of the night that encompasses all of our fears, demons, and desires. He is a creature that is beyond both justice and vengeance he wishes to impart on the criminal element for the brutal slaying of his parents. Daredevil fights crime because as lawyer Matt Murdock he wishes to bring lawbreakers to justice. Moon Knight interposes himself between the criminal and his intended victim because it is something that he must do as a knight of the moon.

This primordial fear that Moon Knight conveys is a tangible thing; it jumps off the page at the reader and touches him deep down where these things are recognized. Never was this more evident than in his run in The Hulk magazine. During the Hatchet Man storyline (Hulk #'s 19 & 20) wherein Moon Knight comes against Marc Spector's brother (as the Hatchet Man), the raw emotion was so graphic and terrible that the reader could actually feel the sickening "chunk" of Rand Spector's hatchet as he buried it into Marlene's back as if it had entered the reader's own. Now this can be chalked up to the degree of realism allowable in the magazine format as opposed to that of the four color, Code-approved format, but it still does not alter the effect.

OH WELL, NO LONGER MY PROBLEM, I GUESS.
I DID MY JOB BY PUTTING HIM HERE AND AS LONG AS HERE IS WHERE HE STAYS, THERE'S NO DANGER TO--
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And yet when Moon Knight did enter into the relm of the Comics Code Authority this writer felt that it would destroy the effectiveness of the character, as these type of scenes would be excited from the book. This prediction almost seemed to come true as the initial stories did not seem to be as moving as were the previous stories in The Hulk. Moon Knight seemed to have become buried under his supporting cast. A cast that was seemingly added to accent the differences between Marvel's caped crusader and the one belonging to DC. It worked. Almost too well.

Moon Knight very nearly became a supporting character in his own book, while the reader had to contend with a veritable army of extras. What with Marlene, Frenchy, Samuels, Nedda, crawley and Gena and her kids, there was hardly any room for Moon Knight--not to mention his three other selves! To be sure, all these characters are interesting in their own right, but let us not lose sight of our vision of darkness, lest it slip away entirely.

---

*Moench refuses to call it a "force" as he maintains that "force" is George Lucas' word.

In a move that will save both the character of Moon Knight--and thus the book--from the depths of obscurity (and prove once and for all that he is more than just another in a long line of Batman clones) Marvel has changed the book Moon Knight from a newsstand sales to a direct sales only format. As a direct sales comic Moon Knight is no longer covered by the Code (as evidenced by the lack of a CCA symbol from issue #7 on) and will be able to once again deal with adult themes in a more realistic way.

To some, this may mean more sex and violence, but to a writer of Moench's caliber it is the unshackling of unnessary chains, allowing him to do what he does best. Write of human drama played out brutally and frankly against the backdrop of Bill Sienkiewicz's masterfully crafted imagery. While admittedly Siekiewicz does a borrow from Adams he does it in such a way as to make it uniquely his own.

Back during the Sixties, Stan Lee broke the mold of comic writing by creating a line of characters that feel real emotions and reacted more akin to three dimensional people that cardboard cutouts; here Moench has done the same. Moon Knight (and his supporting cast) get so emotionally involved with the cases they are on that they uttur no snappy "Spider-Man" patter. It has always been disturbing (to me) that virtually every superhero since the inception of Spider-Man has had a sparkling wit and razor sharp repartee. Moon Knight has neither of these; they would be out of place in his grim "creature of the night" visage.

In his diologues with Bushman (issues #1, 9 &10) Moon Knight says that he has learned the lesson in fear that Bushman had taught him. A deadly lesson it has been to, for Bushman himself falls prey to the terror generated by the spectral image of Moon Knight. Not only Spector's former boss but all criminals are stricken with the same contageous fear of Moon Knight. Yet it is only the criminal element that feel this fear. The innocent, one would suppose, have no need to fear Moon Knight. Witness the bag lady in "A Long Way to Dawn" (Hulk #20). She carries on a semi-lucid conversation with Moon Knight with no fear. His dark forboding figure is wasted on her, for there is no evil in her.

...OR MAYBE JUST 'CAUSE I WAS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF RESEARCH HOSPITAL.
ANYWAYS, NOW THAT I'M HERE, MIGHT AS WELL CHANGE TO MOON KNIGHT-- USE THE TRUNCHEON'S GRAPPLING HOOK TO REACH THE ROOF.
EH--?

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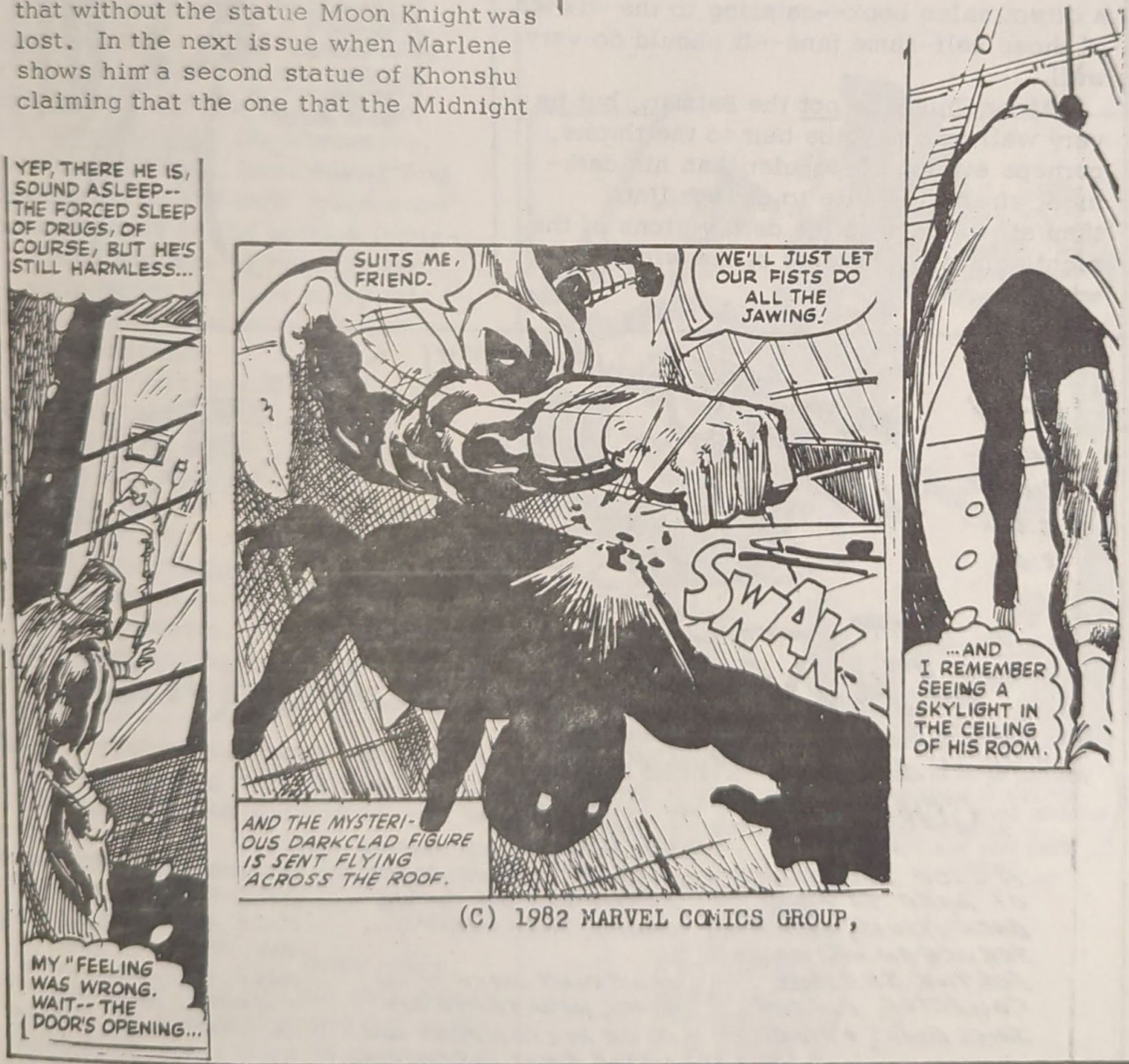
Still there is more to that fear than just the criminal's fear of being caught or retribution; for both Lockley and Frenchy feel an unnameable twinge when they pass the statue of Khonshu, the Egyptian god of the moon that is Moon Knight's mentor (#6). Perhaps it is due in part to their checkered pasts and the fact that neither of them are truely "innocent" as is the bag lady. In issue #9 when the statue is destroyed, Moon Knight feels helpless. Although he recues himself from Bushman's trap, along with Samuels and the Midnight Man. He determines that without the statue Moon Knight was lost. In the next issue when Marlene shows him a second statue of Khonshu claiming that the one that the Midnight Man destroyed was only a fake, (and he defeats Bushman) Grant asks Marlene which was the real and which was the fake. He then decides that he really does not want to know, leaving the readers to decide for themselves. Ultimately, it does not really matter which one is real, for Khonshu (and thus Moon Knight) is more than a mere statue (and more than the man that is within the Moon Knight costume). They are both (in spite of Moench's objections to the word) a "force"; a force to be reckoned with in the comic world. Moon


YEP, THERE HE IS, SOUND ASLEEP-- THE FORCED SLEEP OF DRUGS, OF COURSE, BUT HE'S STILL HARMLESS...
MY "FEELING WAS WRONG. WAIT-- THE DOOR'S OPENING...
SUITS ME, FRIEND.
WE'LL JUST LET OUR FISTS DO ALL THE JAWING!
SWAK
AND THE MYSTERIOUS DARKCLAD FIGURE IS SENT FLYING ACROSS THE ROOF.
...AND I REMEMBER SEEING A SKYLIGHT IN THE CEILING OF HIS ROOM.

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Knight is more than just another Batman ripoff...he is his own man, not Batman. Also Frenchy and Marlene are not Robin and Batgirl. They are not sidekicks, but rather equal partners in an organization that fights, not crime, but rather the criminals that perpetrate them.

The reader can tell that Moench and Sienkiewicz care about the characters in the book, and thus the reader cannot help feeling the same way about them. This caring, coupled with the realism of the book, have made it quite the fan hit. As a direct sales book--catering to the wishes of those self-same fans--it should do very well.

Moon Knight is not the Batman, but he very well proves to be heir to the throne, perhaps even more popular than his dark-night sire in the time to come. Until then all we have is the dark visions of the night, and the whispers of the wicked wind.

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RELEVANCE
IS IT RETURNING?

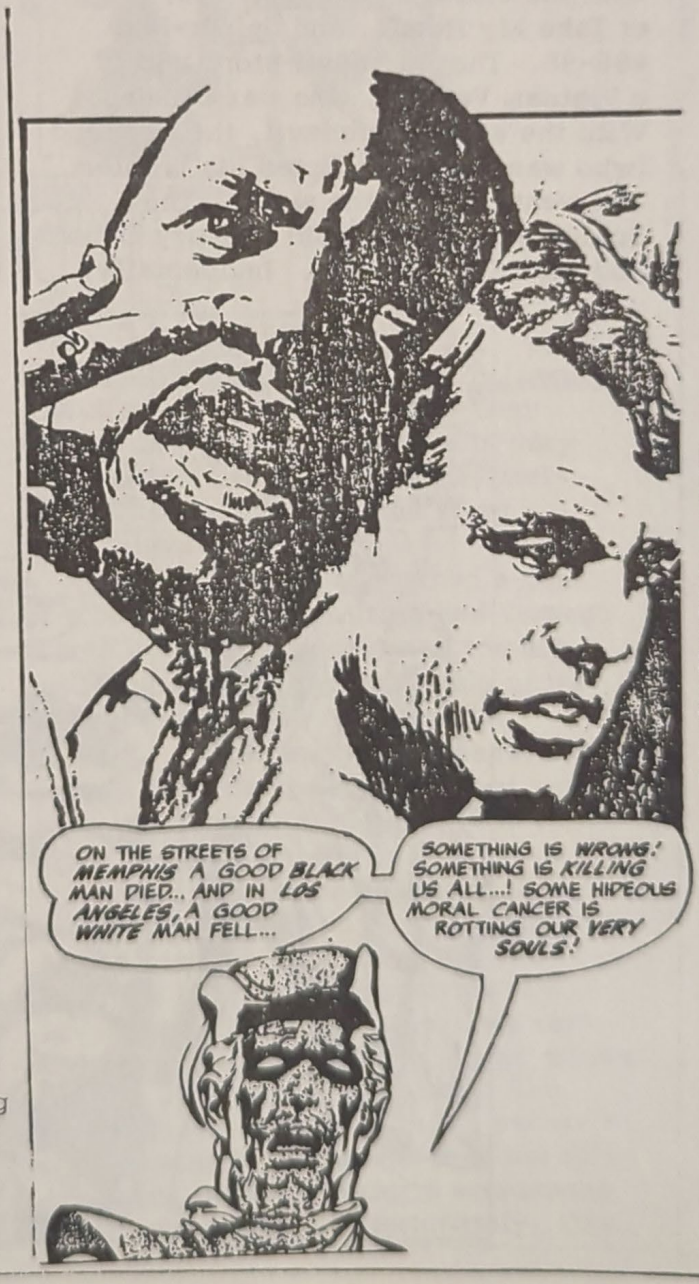
BY A. NEILSON

The year was 1970. The Green Lantern magazine sales were falling. The creative crew of Green Lantern decided on an all new direction to see if Green Lantern could survive. Under Denny O'Neil, Neal Adams and Julius Schwartz, the term "relevance" came into vogue in the comics industry. These men used Green Lantern as a springboard to voice many different topics that were on the minds of many Americans.

Drugs, overpopulation, pollution; nothing was taboo. With the combination of Green Lantern and Green Arrow as a duo searching for truth, justice and America, Green Lantern #'s 76-87 and 89 became critical classics. During this time, Green Lantern questioned his identity as a man and superhero, Green Arrow went bankrupt and became the voice of the people, and Black Canary grew from an insecure widow into a forced maturity with a vibrant personality.

The stories were well written, poignantly illustrated and edited with a deep sense of compassion. However the books did not sell well enough to keep the concept going, and so Green Lantern was cancelled.

To be sure, here were many other reasons why the book did not sell. Among them were: the fact that comic fans were not quite ready for realism in their escapist fare. Also, Neal Adams' art was not always reaching its deadlines--


ON THE STREETS OF MEMPHIS A GOOD BLACK MAN DIED.. AND IN LOS ANGELES, A GOOD WHITE MAN FELL...
SOMETHING IS WRONG! SOMETHING IS KILLING US ALL...! SOME HIDEOUS MORAL CANCER IS ROTTING OUR VERY SOULS!

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though, with the deep realism and thought that went into the work, one could understand why it was late.

The Green Lantern series influenced many other DC books during that time, including the Denny O'Neil - Mike Friedrich scriped Justice League of America and the Dick Giordano edited Teen Titans. But with the failure of Green Lantern the relevance age ended fading away into comics limbo.

The Green Lantern relevance may have been inspired by Marvel. Marvel's earlier age of relevance existed with the classic Daredevil #48,"Brother Take My Hand", and Spider-Man #96-98. The Daredevil story told of a Vietnam Veteran, who was blinded. With the aid of Daredevil, the veteran (who was black) accepted his problem, and went out into the world. The Spider-Man stories told of Harry Osborn and his LSD addiction. Incidentally, these Spider-Man stories existed without the Comics Code seal of approval. However, the Marvel works were not as well publicized so they were unfortunately not as well known, with the exception of these Spider-Man stories.

Relevance is not dead, though, it's just more subtly thrown in these days and used with rarity. Bacause of that, these new relevance tales are more appreicated. In fact, when a non-comics reader says comics are junk and have no redeeming social value, a comics fan will often grab one of these comics and argue that point.

Many themes originally started in Green Lantern are being used in new and different ways. With the world being so complicated now, new issues are being used in comics more and more.

The drug theme began with Spider-Man #96-98 and Green Lantern #85-86.

I BEEN READIN' ABOUT YOU... HOW YOU WORK FOR THE BLUE SKINS... AND HOW ON A PLANET SOMEPLACE YOU HELPED OUT THE ORANGE SKINS...
...AND YOU DONE CONSIDERABLE FOR THE PURPLE SKINS! ONLY THERE'S SKINS YOU NEVER BOTHERED WITH--!
...THE BLACK SKINS! I WANT TO KNOW... HOW COME?!
ANSWER ME THAT, MR. GREEN LANTERN!
I... CAN'T...
CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
6

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The former involved, as was previously mentioned, Spider-Man's closest friend, Harry Osborn hooked on LSD; and the latter had Green Arrow's partner, Speedy becoming a junkie.

Daredevil #183-184 is probably the most well known of new breed of drug classics. The story's existence in itself is controversial because the comics code tried to ban the story. Supposedly, the story showed "kids" with paraphenelia; bongs, pipes, etc. Frank Miller, through his excellent storytelling, subtle dialogue, fast pacing and graphic realism, produced a drug classic reminiscent of the originals. With his use of the Punisher, the addicted child and a frustrated Daredevil, one could understand the effects of drugs and the user, and hence, the effects of that on friends and relative. The PCP two partner had such an impact; that if the story were reality, it would scare the addiction out of anyone.

Cary Bates and Ross Andru developed the most tragic Flash miniseries in that character's existence. In three issues (Flash #275-277), the writer and editor had Iris Allen, Flash's wife, killed and the Flash himself drugged with PCP. When the PCP went into the Flash's system, Flash tried to kill the Justice League and destroy their satellite. But in this series the PCP was used more as a plot device than as a full fledged story about the drug's effects. However, because of the very few Flash stories utilizing a social theme, this series is considered a Flash classic.

Iron Man, during the David Michelinie-Bob Layton, tenure on the book, became an alcoholic. In Iron Man #123, the classic "Demon in the Bottle" story, Tony Stark looked at himself through a mirror. He saw his tortured soul, his alcohol induced ugliness, and his end. He eventually kicked his habit, at the lowest time of his life. Usually, one can only go so low before they realize they have

a problem. This happened to Tony Stark. The story was written in very good taste, and was not overly melodramatic, which made the story a truly relevant piece.

World's Finest Comics had a gem of a backup series starring Red Tornado It was underrated because of the art; but the stories at the beginning of its run were especially well written.

In #266, J.M. DeMatteis presented a reason for drug abuse instead of drug abuse itself; child neglect. The title? "God Bless the Child".

Prejudice is a social issue that rose in the seventies, but has since lost its impact on the world. The first and best series of stories that involved prejudice were the late sixties/early seventies Silver Surfer series written by Marvel's Stan Lee. The stories usually dealt with the people's unreasoning hatred and fear of the Silver Surfer, and the Surfer's acceptance of this prejudice. Unfortunately, this

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classic series died for the first reason that was cited previously when Green Lantern's failure was mentioned; comic fans did not want realism in their escapist fare.

DC's Swamp Thing was similar to the Silver Surfer in terms of the prejudice towards the main character. Only Len Wein and Berni Wrightson gave the Swamp Thing a dimmer and more disgusted view of the people that hated him. To quote David Michellinie's Swamp Thing dialogue in Swamp Thing #14, this represents his attitude, "(I'm going) back to the swamp, mister. At least the filth there doesn't pretend to be something it's not."

Politics themselves have influenced many heroes. For example, Elliot Maggin wrote a four part Green Arrow for Mayor series that spanned over many years. In Green Lantern #87 Oliver Queen thought about running for office, after seeing a riot which left four dead. In World's Finest Comic #210, he decided not to run for office after seeing the corruption of power. In Green Lantern #100, after another riot, Ollie decided to run for office. Finally in World's Finest Comic #255, he loses the election. In doing so, he saw the compromises he would have had to make. He was disgusted by the compromises, and decided to stay with his superhero career.

In the title, the question asked is "Relevance: Is It Returning?" Considering the many thought provoking pieces that have appeared in these comic books, the answer has to be yes. The relevant comics will always be around to make us think dream, hope, get angry, and cry. They make us care. And they make us give a damn!

007 CARD CORNER

by
JIM MAIN

Greetings, non-sport card collectors. Jim Main here, back for another installment of (ta-da) "Card Corner". Before I get into the actual column itself, I'd like to first of all thank you all for the kind words on Card Corner, and all the sympathy cards sent to me (?).

Card Corner Comminique - Just recently released from Topps is the new set of cards based on the popular TV comedy series M.A.S.H. A word to the wise: it may be best to buy a complete set like I did, as I've been informed that it takes awhile to get a complete set together of these cards, by doing it the hard way.

Rumor has it that Topps is going to do a set on the TV series Greatest American Hero. Also through the grapvine, I hear Topps is still threatening us with an issue on that popular TV series, The Love Boat. Mercy!

And now: (Quick, somebody get John Barry) Daa da daaa da daa da. It's time to exmine the ever popular James Bond 007 gum card sets by Philadelphia Gum.

It's obvious that 1965-1966 were good years for owners of James Bond. Just look at the line of toys, games, models, figures and more that ushered forth during that two year span. Remember that great attache' case that came out? Well, besides the toy and game companies, the man with a license to kill was turned over to the Philadelphia Chewing gum company along with a license to merchandise. The result of this was two sets of nicely produced black and white photo cards that many collectors enjoy having as an addition to their collection.

The first set, simply titled "James Bond", came off the press in 1965. The strange thing about this issue was that not just one Bond film was focused on, but three! The reason or reasons behind this move may only be known by the characters owner (s) I could only speculate...maybe I will later on.

Whatever the motivation behind it, this 66 set of cards was divided into three, not very equal, sections. Dr. No was covered with cards 1-18 (18 cards) From Russia With Love, with #'s 19-41 (23), and finally, Goldfinger was reviewed with cards 42-66 (25). Why not an equal 22 cards per film? Again, who really knows for sure?

Set Specifics-Standard 2 1/2" by 3 1/2" size cards, white bordered, black and white photo fronts. Reverse side is white, with the title "James Bond" printed in white letters over a black banner. Below the banner, "Secret Agent 007". as well as target that contains the card number, on the left of the card title, and the credit lines on the cards bottom portion, are printed in black ink.

James Bond-Thunderball, was the next, and, for some reason, the last set dealing with Ian Flemings character that Philadelphia gum would handle. Like the set they had issed before, this was 66 cards in all. However, unlike the previous set, this one

was based on not three films, but just one-Thunderball. Even more, this 1966 set used a sepia tone on the black and white photos on the card fronts, making it a much nicer product.

Besides the cards and gum included in the wrapper, Philly gum also inserted a "secret decoder" in the package. With this, one would decipher the "code quiz" found on the cards reverse side, located just over the credits. And for those budding spies, an offer was made on the wrapper for an "official James Bond 007 code-O-Matic", which you could use to create "your own secret code messages"with.

Any die hard Bond fan could get his for only 75¢ and five wrappers! How could anyone pass up an offer like that?

Set Specifics-Standard 2 1/2" by 3 1/2" cards, 66 in a set. Fronts in black and white sepia tone, and white bordered, depicting scenes from the film Thunderball. On the backs-black ink on white backgrounds. Card # printed on top left inside a square also accompanied by a frogman figure. On the top middle, printed in a black wavy banner is printed in white letters, "James Bond." Below this, the caption "Secret Agent 007"; the card caption; the narrative; code quiz; and finally the credits, all in sequence and in black ink.

Prices on these sets are the same in every way. The cards themselves can range from 25¢ to $2.00, depending on the condition and the dealer. Complete sets can fetch anything from $30.00 to $60.00. And I've seen the wrappers go from $5.00 to $10.00 each. The"secret decoder" from the Thunder-issue is reportedly in the neighborhood of $5.00-$8.00 though I've never seen one. Looking at the price range for the wrappers, maybe it would've been better for one to forget the "Code-O-Matic" offered with the Thunderball issue and save the wrappers...but who knew?

Well, I promised a bit of speculation on why I thought the reasoning behind Philly gum printing a set dealing with three films and not just one, and here it is. It would be my assumption that Bond was not as popular during the years his first two films (Dr. No, and From Russia With Love) appeared,which may have made merchandise producers, especially gum card printers, shy away from picking up the license. Or, maybe Bond's owners could not reach a suitable agreement with a card company during those early years, and that, finally, in 1965, they finally contracted Philly gum to do the series. Then, in order to catch up, Philly or Bond's owners decided to catch up and handle all three films in one shot. Who really knows for sure? Well, enough speculation.

For those interested (or still awake) there were two other "James Bond" gum card sets issued in 1965, both from the English card company, Somportex. They were: "Exciting World of James Bond (50 cards), and their issue of "Thunderball" (72 cards). Somportex also printed the "You Only Live Twice" (78 cards) set in 1967. In the past two years I've been collecting cards, I have yet to run across any of these. Does anyone out there have these? How about the English issue of "On Her Majesty's Secret Service?" Can anyone supply me with information on these four virtually unknown sets? If so, write to me at this address: Card Corner, C/O Jim Main, 121 Railroad St., New Milford, Conn. 06776. Any info anyone can supply me with would be greatly appreciated. Next Issue-The "Man on the Moon" cards.

Till then, Happy Collecting,

Jim Main

STAR TREK II™

Picking Up The Pieces

BY *Colin J. Krapp*

(C) 1982 Paramount Pictures

With a course set for "out there, thataway," the U.S.S. Enterprise, still the pride of Starfleet, makes the quantum leap into light speed and heads off to...where? As we know now, the destination is STAR TREK II, due to be released June 4, 1982.

Before moving ahead to STAR TREK II, let's take a look back at STAR TREK-THE MOTION PICTURE. We were introduced to the new Klingon battlecruisers, an odd new breed of Klingons, a very much changed Federation Starfleet, the sleek, completely refurbished Enterprise, her new captain, Will Decker (son of the late Commodore Matt Decker), and the new navigator, the Deltan Lt. Ilia. The starship, led by the wildly obsessed, desk weary James Kirk, roared off with everyone but Mr. Spock, but even he showed up at a most opportune moment. But soon after that event, as many TREK fans agree, the movie fell on its face and ended up as a rewrite of The Changeling. Add to that, both new characters, Capt. Decker and Lt. Ilia disappear as V'Ger leaves this plane of existence.

Fandom has explained many of the changes found in ST-TMP. I won't go into them here, but I can refer you to "The Best of TREK #4," edited by Walter Irwin and G.B. Love, and published by Signet Books. Most of the articles in "Best #4 deal with the incongruities between ST-TMP and the TV series. They also offer some interesting insight into some concepts found in the ST-TMP novel, such as the "New Human" movement.

So we find ourselves faced with the onset of STAR TREK II, which went into production in early November, 1981. It was within a week of this that a disturbing rumor came forth, one which had a good run during the early stages of ST-TMP: Spock will die in STAR TREK II. Fans went berserk. A campaign similar to the "Save Star Trek" drive of 1967 began, and by mid-December, Paramount had received mounds of protest mail. The studio, the director Nicholas Meyer, and even the Great Bird of the Galaxy himself were silent. No one knew. Even stories similar to the

Beatles era "Paul is dead" rumor popped up, and tales of backward tapes recounting Spock's death during "A Taste of Armageddon," and countless "He's dead Jim"'s made their way through the TREK circles. The hubbub finally quited somewhat when Leonard Nimoy himself telephoned a leading fan magazine and explained that Spock was quite alive...or just about.

The first film footage of Star Trek II, titled the Vengeance of Khan was previewed at the March Creation Convention with Walter Koenig as guest speaker. Fandom Feature was there to review this event. Using the audience's responses to the movie, we at Fandom Feature predict that Star Trek II will be the hit movie of the summer.

In what has been learned, this movie will take place eight years after Star Trek: The Motion Picture. James Kirk is still admiral/acting captain of the U.S.S. Enterprise. Spock is still first officer, and Dr. McCoy is chief surgeon. However, Chekov is an officer on the U.S.S. Reliant. Two new characters are also introduced. Lt. Saavak, played by Kristy Alley, is a Vulcan/Romulan, and David, played by Merrit Butvick, is Kirk's son.

KIRK'S SON?

The basic plot of the story is that Khan Noonian Singh, played by Ricardo Montalban of TV Fantasy Island fame, takes over a Federation starship to seek revenge on Kirk and company. Why he wants revenge can only be known by seeing the movie.

(C) 1982 Paramount Pictures

Mr. Koenig also said that Star Trek II will be nonstop action. "You won't sit there and see a bunch of actors with their mouths open." When asked the question which has been on millions of Trek fans' minds, "What will happen to Spock?" Koenig said he was not at liberty to say. But what if Spock dies? Can Star Trek survive?

The thought of Spock-less TREK goes back to the planning of ST-TMP. At that time, neither Nimoy nor Bill Shatner had agreed to reprise their roles of Spock and Kirk. Therefore, new characters of Capt. Will Decker and Lt. Xon were created. The original Decker was basically the same as the final product. Xon, however, was a full Vulcan, young (about the same age Spock was at the time of "The Cage"), and having a hard time coping with the illogical, irrational humans. The signing of Shatner and Nimoy reduced Decker to a shadow of what he was designed to be, and Xon, through a long process which changed his race and sex, became Lt. Ilia.

Alright, what if Spock lives but isn't seen? The STAR TREK family, the great triumvirate, would still be broken up. What would TREK be without Kirk flanked by Spock and McCoy? Even in ST-TMP, Kirk uses all measures to get McCoy, and after the loss of Commander Sonak in the transporter accident, Kirk says he'd rather have a Vulcan as Science Officer. But isn't he really saying he'd rather have the Vulcan? It would be useless to go into the body-mind-soul implications of the Kirk Spock-McCoy relation since there is little left to say that hasn't been said already. But what of Spock? Will he go back to Vulcan and live out his life as a recluse as before? Will he inherit his father's job as Federation ambassador to Vulcan? Will he get a command of his own? Or will he be a disembodied voice or a note that Kirk hears every now and then?

Leonard Nimoy himself said when he signed to portray the Vulcan in ST-TMP that he would not like to see anyone else play Spock in a STAR TREK film. However, can't Paramount pull the rug out and try to cast a new Spock, or eliminate the character altogether, as they tried to do when they created Lt. Xon? And if STAR TREK did lose Spock as we know him, would the fans still come to see it? Would STAR TREK still sell? Has the studio forgotten "I grok Spock?" According to yet another recent interview with Nimoy, conducted by the Associated Press, Nimoy was quoted as saying that Spock's return after STAR TREK II is up to the fans to decide. Does that mean that Spock may be permanently lost in whatever Tholian limbo he is cast into?

It seems now that the ball is in Hollywood's court, and it's up to Paramont and Leonard Nimoy to decide the fate of TREK's most popular figure. STAR TREK offered us hope for the future of humanity. But for now, it's up to us to hope for the future of STAR TREK.

ANSWERS

1. Brothers 2. Aunt-Niece 3. Brothers 4. Stepbrother-Stepsister 5. Father-Daughter 6. Stepson-Stepfather 7. Nephew-Uncle 8. Warlord is a reincarnation of D'artagnan 9. Father-Son 10. Jimmy is a reincarnation of Marco 11. Divorced 12. Father-Daughter 13. Father-in-law-Son-in-law 14. Aunt-Niece 15. Same 16. Same 17. Husband-Late Wife 19. Grandfather-Grandson

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5. Name your three favorite writers in order of preference.
6. Name your favorite inker.
7. Name your favorite editor.
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9. Name your three favorite Marvel Comics in order of preference.
10. Name your three favorite alternate press comics in order preference.
11. Do you like individual superhero stories or superteam stories?
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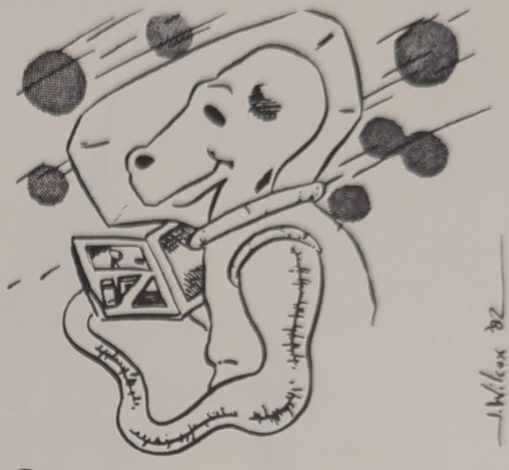

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